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## INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT

# The Extreme Right-Wing Landscape International Perspective – Canadian Connections

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Intelligence Assessments Branch  
Direction de l'évaluation du renseignement

Canada



# INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT

2019 01 29

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CSIS IA 2018-19/35

## The Extreme Right-Wing Landscape International Perspective & Canadian Connections

Violent right-wing extremism in both Canada and abroad does not exist in isolation. Rather it is comprised of a complex, constantly shifting, and interconnected range of individuals and groups operating both online and offline. The purpose of this Intelligence Assessment (IA) is to provide a brief overview of the extreme right-wing landscape in Europe and the United States while identifying links to Canada and Canadians.

### Key Assessments

#### Defining Violent Extremism

For the purposes of this IA, violent extremism is defined as a group's (both online or real world) belief that its success or survival cannot be separated from the need for systemic violence against a perceived threatening group (i.e. Jews, visible minorities, Islam, Muslim immigrants, etc.).

Violent extremism is based on discourse that describes who is part of the group, who is part of the perceived threatening group, and the justification for the use of violence. This discourse can include a wide range of different media, including books, images, lectures, online discussions, videos, and conversations.

Modified from "Extremism" written by J.M. Berger, 2018



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## International Overview

1. In early 2017, European Security Commissioner Sir Julian King highlighted the growing threat posed by right-wing extremism and claimed that he was not aware of a single European Union (EU) member state not affected by it in some way. A recent public report from Britain on counter terrorism assessed that 20.59% of all violent attacks in Europe in 2017 were perpetrated by individuals holding extreme right-wing views (representing an increase from 5.56% the previous year). Additionally, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) assessed that between 2008-2017 right-wing extremists accounted for roughly 71% of all domestic extremist related killings in the United States as compared to 25% by domestic Islamist extremists.

2. Right-wing extremism abroad is not new, nor is it a homogeneous movement. Rather it is comprised of a complex, and constantly shifting range of individuals and groups operating both online and in public. The most commonly espoused beliefs include: Identitarianism (see text box at right), white supremacy (including neo-Nazism) and anti-Semitism. These groups and individuals pursue different objectives and they also differ in their willingness to use violence to achieve their ends.

### What is Identitarianism?

Identitarianism entails a rejection of liberal multiculturalism and a promotion of the idea that different ethnic groups are equal but ought to live in separation from one another. Identitarians adhere to the notion of a white, Western European ethnic and cultural identity. They also draw from a conspiratorial fear that western nations will ultimately succumb to "Islamification" from mass migration, which will eventually lead to a "Great Replacement" of white inhabitants. Identitarians are generally assessed to be part of the broader alt-right milieu.

## Use of Social Media

4. Social media is transnational by nature and allows individuals and groups from around the world to share their extreme right-wing views. Several studies analyzing social networks demonstrate the ease by which European and American extreme right-wing content is consumed by like-minded Canadians.



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5. Over the past year, attempts by social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to de-platform users espousing extreme right-wing views have met with some success.

Material removed from mainstream platforms, however, can often still be found elsewhere online.

6. Over the past year, a range of anti-fascist and alternative media outlets have engaged in a series of public 'doxing' campaigns to reveal the real names/addresses/employers of those they believe to be part of the extreme right-wing milieu. In North America these attempts have resulted in some individuals losing their jobs, apartments, and friends, and, in Canada,

Real World Contact

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## Identitarianism

11. No European country has been impacted by the refugee crisis more than Germany which has received more than 1.4 million people since 2015. In March 2018, eight members of the Freital Group were convicted of forming a right-wing terrorist group and carrying out five separate attacks against refugee homes and shelters, along with the offices of left-wing political opponents in Dresden. More recently, German police arrested eight individuals alleged to be part of the Revolution Chemnitz movement on suspicion of forming a "far-right terrorist organization" and planning attacks against foreigners and political enemies.

12.

In January 2017, for example, Alexandre Bissonnette shot multiple worshipers inside the Grande mosquée de Québec, killing six and wounding 19. His actions were motivated, in part, by his extreme hatred and fear of Muslims particularly within the context of their immigration to Canada.

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## Summary

31. Canada is not immune to extreme right-wing violence.

Additionally, the April 2018 van attack in Toronto which resulted in the deaths of 10 people, has alerted Canada to the dangers of lesser-known forms of violent right-wing extremism such as the "Incel" movement.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Incel is one of several online subcultures found in what is commonly referred to as the Manosphere. Formed in the early 1990's by a Canadian university student, the Incel movement has evolved into numerous online spaces where predominantly young, heterosexual, white males share not only their despair and loneliness, but also extreme misogyny including calls to violence against women. The underlying ideology of the Incel movement is male supremacy.





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